THE BUILDER,
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1843.

THERE are motives suggested by the closing of the year and the near approach to the commencement of our second annual series, that induce us to make a few remarks in anticipation, and to prepare ourselves and our readers for increased profit in our progress together. The time past has necessarily been spent in many matters of initiation and induction; the future has promise of a career more matured, although it cannot be of more successful workings; so far as THE BUILDER is concerned, a much more flattering result could hardly have been desired, but there are circumstances which will, in all probability, distinguish the forthcoming year that we seek a timely occasion to speak upon, with some slight reference to the past. Anxious as we have been to procure for this journal the title, and to give it the character of a permanent trade book and record, it is natural that we should wish to have all who care about such matters associated with us at some point in our progress, when the backward view may be as little discouraging as possible. What we mean is, that all those who are in a position to accompany us as readers, contributors, and fellow-labourers, we would have join at the starting rather than at an advanced period, with the disadvantages of lost ground, and the "bringing up the leeway." It is our intention, therefore, to prepare an exposition of our plans for the forthcoming year, founded on the experience of the past, and to invite every member of the Building fraternity to the perusal of it. Our principal object now is to solicit our readers to lend a kindly hand in the dissemination of our views, and so to assist in bringing in to our confederacy, and under our leading, the whole of those whose objects and interests are one and the same as that of THE BUILDER.

To our indulgent friends and readers of the past year, few words will suffice. We have had the happiness of securing a large share of their approbation; that we have not pleased all, and at all times, is to be expected, however much we may regret any difference of view; much of this, however, has arisen from that which we have taken pains to make known heretofore. A new plan and a new organization are matters of difficulty, and require time and patience for the conquest;—the one we have given to it, the other has been gained. With these advantages in our favour as compared with the past, we look forward with increased confidence to the future, and trust not only to be endued with that strength which conducts to the discharge of every promise, but to so much more as may lead to scenes and achievements of ever new and never-ending profit and gratification.

What we would particularly impress upon the workmen is that which is so pertinently expressed in Mr. Newnham's letter, and for which purpose we inserted it. Let them send any information, and make effort at describing any thing that is useful and peculiar. It may appear to some a little irksome to go over homely and familiar ground, as it does to others to soar occasionally to loftier heights; but the universality of our sphere of labour demands it all, and without it our structure would be incomplete. The brick must be moulded and the stone quarried, as well as the painting and polishing and the gilding.

Nor will our other more accomplished friends find fault if we remind them of the useful, sterling essences of criticism. He is but an imperfect preceptor who indulges in the vice of taking exceptions, and neglects to bend his mind to amend and instruct. Surely it becomes those whose privilege it is to detect faults, to be able, and not only able, but willing, to remedy them. It is thus that correction and instruction go hand in hand.

PUBLIC BATHS.

It will readily be imagined, from what we have said as to the importance of an abundant supply of pure water, that we should seize with avidity the occasion to notice any steps made in the direction of procuring that supply. We recollect, in the lectures of our learned professor of architecture (Mr. Cockerell) at the Royal Academy, how he dwelt upon a description of the public baths of Rome, and depicted in glowing terms their magnificence and extent, and the practices that prevailed in their popular use; how even the Emperor—we think it was Hadrian himself—mixed with the populace who frequented the baths, and had the free privilege of access to all, both high and low, secured the *luxury* of cleanliness, and doubtless its concomitant—HEALTH. We do not, it is true, look for—we do not know that we could wish for—any such display of patrician and plebeian "*hob-and-nob*" commingling, but we would not, on the other hand, choose to have matters at that vast remove of wide extremes, that leaves us without one single instance of provision for the popular wants in respect of bathing establishments. Of course we allude to gratuitous ones, and to those by which all classes and all sexes may be equally benefitted. If bathing and plentiful ablutions be good for all, all should have it; and it would be easy to secure it under the most salutary regulations. We are glad to find that in the city of Edinburgh the working men themselves are bestirring in this respect, and, under the patronage of Lord Dunferline and others, are likely to carry out their project; but we have the pleasure also of being able to state that our own metropolis is not either asleep, for we have a printed public notice at present before us, headed "Bathing in the Thames—Nuisance," but whose object is to provide a "Swimming-school and Bathing-house Establishment" for the district of Millwall and the Isle of Dogs. Whatever is done in this respect, let us urge that consideration for ALL be mixed up with it. A sense of decency or delicacy, call it which you will, may tempt to the suppression of a practice by which the public eye is now and then offended; but there are suggestions of an equally pressing description wherein decency and delicacy are as much involved, though in a different manner; cleanliness and wholesomeness would be greatly subserved and promoted by a popular practice of frequent bathing, and once this were established, we should be astonished to have borne so long with the opposites of what we may not more particularly describe without offence to "eare polite."

We heartily wish success to both, and every project of this stamp, and urge perseverance on the parties who have undertaken or may undertake them. We understand that meetings are held and lectures are contemplated in furtherance of the objects of the Millwall Institution, of which particulars may be obtained at the Temperance House, 16, Ferry-road, Millwall. We have gone out of our way to give this notice in order to the advancement of a matter we have so much at heart—the comfort and the well-doing of the working classes.

BIRMINGHAM,—ITS MANUFACTORIES, AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

We trust that important results will flow out of the visit of his Royal Highness Prince Albert, on Wednesday last, to this far-famed metropolis of the hardware manufactory. Birmingham, although exhibiting for a long time past symptoms of debility and depletion, construed by many as having arisen out of a long period of overstrained efforts, and the absorption of a vaporous prosperity, has yet within the seeds of an interminable life of vigour, which the warm and radiant sun of art may cause to strike root, and branch forth to the eclipsing of any former time or product of its wonderful garden. His royal highness comes from a country which contains, and we trust he brings from it a quality, which, united to the powerful masculine genius he would find the other day developed in Birmingham, is calculated to produce fruit such as England waits to taste of, and Birmingham in particular to be replenished with. The arts of manufacture have probably outshot themselves a little in Birmingham, and the arts of design have been left as much in the rear. Bring them *abreast*, and the car of her prosperity will run smoothly and triumphantly, and with a speed and certainty of which the railroad it boasts may be regarded as having been the fitting type and harbinger.

We claim for ourselves and our class the special privilege of being most deeply interested in the mission, for such we regard it, fleeting as it was, of the Prince to the manufactories and buildings of Birmingham. It is true that only a few of the principal were chosen, but then the more neccessary, and we trust the more profitable it is for us to report. In doing this we avail ourselves of the columns of a contemporary, most distinguished of the daily papers for its attention to that section which our province comprises; we allude to the *Morning Herald*. We pass over so much of the report as merely pertains to the manner of the Prince's reception, the accompaniment of the *cortège* and the like, contenting ourselves with observing that those were all that the loyalist subject of the sovereign and the arts could desire, and commence by enumerating in the order of the *route* the works and buildings which were the objects of his royal highness's visit and inspection, we may claim, as of direct interest to THE BUILDER,—even to the guns and buttons, for the processes, if not the uses, and we know not if the last be disputed, are in their connection and analogy most intimate with the most of building art.

1.—*The Glass Manufactory of Messrs. Bacchus and Son, in Dartmouth-street.*

Here his royal highness was received by the Messrs. Bacchus, by whom he was conducted into the glass-house, where the different processes of the manufacture were in operation, the mode of conducting which was explained to the prince. While in this part of the works a beautiful two-handled cup was blown in his presence, and a very elegant glass centre-piece was produced by the new mode of pressing—a process somewhat similar to die-stamping, and the rapidity with which the glass was passed through the different stages, from its raw or liquid state till it was turned out from the mould perfect and fit for use, was regarded by his royal highness with great interest. The articles produced in this way have all the finish,

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